

**Meeting Report  
Information and Education Advisory Panel  
South Atlantic Fishery Management Council  
Charleston, South Carolina  
January 29 - 30, 2019**

The Information and Education Advisory Panel (AP) met January 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019 in Charleston, SC to discuss outreach and communication topics relevant to Council programs, projects, and products. The AP received presentations and provided recommendations on the Council's current outreach programs and additional outreach partnership opportunities, to include:

- 1) Citizen Science Program
- 2) SAFMC Electronic Newsletter Transition
- 3) Fishery Performance Reports
- 4) Best Practices under Snapper Grouper Regulatory Amendment 29
- 5) Developing Partnerships for AP Member/Agency Outreach Projects & Campaigns
- 6) MyFishCount
- 7) For-Hire Electronic Reporting Trainings
- 8) System Management Plan Workgroup
- 9) Fish Rules Mobile App
- 10) Fishermen's Forum

**1) Citizen Science Program**

The AP received an update on the [Council's Citizen Science Program](#), including the program's two pilot projects, Release and FISHstory. After reviewing what the Citizen Science Program has accomplished this past year (adoption of Standard Operating Policies and Procedures and recommendations from Action Teams), staff provided a demo of the SAFMC Release App, a newly developed mobile application to collect data on scamp discards. Some AP members asked about the level of detail required when selecting fishing location, urging staff to include language that will help people to understand that their fishing locations will be aggregated when presented to the public. Staff assured the AP that users will participate in training modules before they can use the application to input their scamp discard information. Additionally, videos have been produced to help users navigate the few data fields in the app and should help alleviate confusion about location requirements. The AP also received an update on the FISHstory project, which uses crowdsourcing via an online platform called Zooniverse to mine species data from historic fishing photos from the 1940s-1970s from a headboat fleet in Cape Canaveral, FL. The project is scheduled to begin this year and will serve as a pilot for testing this kind of methodology for mining data from fishery photographs.

**2) SAFMC Electronic Newsletter Transition**

The AP received an update on the Council's recent decision to move to a fully electronic newsletter, allowing for more content flexibility while also improving the timeliness of

material. Up until the Spring 2018 issue, Council staff posted a pdf version of the newsletter to the website, emailed links to the newsletter to the Council's distribution list, and mailed out hard copies to print copy subscribers. Mailing costs were high and print copy recipients were asked to respond to a mailer indicating they still wanted to receive hard copies of the newsletter. However, only 11 responses were received. As a result of the response rate and direction from the Council, Council staff moved forward with producing a fully electronic newsletter using a combination of blog posts hosted on the Council's website that would be linked to an e-newsletter e-mail message using Constant Contact. The AP reviewed three Constant Contact newsletter templates and provided recommendations to staff on what design elements to use from each template. The majority of AP members suggested using one template ([B as seen in the AP's Briefing Book](#)), noting that it might also be helpful to include videos at the top of each newsletter to capture the attention of the Council's audience. AP members suggested that staff include a table of contents in each newsletter to help readers navigate to reoccurring articles, like the Chair's Column and the Citizen Science Corner.

After discussing the Constant Contact templates, the AP reviewed how articles will be posted and archived on the website, noting the newly designed format for the Council's "[News](#)" tab on safmc.net. AP members liked the new format, but did recommend that staff provide language within each article at the top to distinguish the difference between a "news release," a "newsletter," and an "announcement." In addition, the AP suggested that relevant story maps be linked on the page for each amendment listed on the "[Amendments Under Development](#)" page of the Council's website.

### 3) **Fishery Performance Reports**

Staff provided an overview of the process and need for developing Fishery Performance Reports with the Advisory Panels for each of the Council's Fishery Management Plans. The AP reviewed two possible ways that Fishery Performance Reports might be presented:

- a formal written document featuring the questions asked of each AP as well as the discussion that followed, and/or
- a shiny app version (an r package which allows for development of web apps).

The AP was asked a series of discussion questions seeking guidance on how to improve efficiency, reduce bias, present the material, and engage the public. AP Members suggested that staff use the format shown in the shiny app since it can host both the formal written document format as well as graphs and data elements that can be manipulated to reflect a user's interests in the fishery. To make the reports even more engaging to the public, the AP suggested the use of imagery to break up the text. The AP also recommended that AP members receive the discussion questions for the Fishery Performance Reports ahead of the meeting in an effort to increase efficiency and possibly reduce the likelihood of one AP member leading the discussion. Council staff were encouraged to be very clear about the purpose of the Fishery Performance Reports, particularly in reference to how they might be used in stock assessments in the future. Since Fishery Performance Reports are already being used in the Mid-Atlantic, the AP suggested that Council staff reach out to the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council to find out how they have combatted some of the challenges outlined in the earlier part of the discussion, including use in stock assessments as well as biases.

**4) Best Practices under Snapper Grouper Regulatory Amendment 29**

Since the Council is currently developing Snapper Grouper Regulatory Amendment 29, which proposes management measures for descending devices, venting tools, circle hooks, and powerheads in the South Atlantic, staff presented the actions in the amendment and sought advice on possible outreach strategies for educating the public on best fishing practices. When asked whether the Council should initiate its own outreach campaign to promote the use of best fishing practices, the AP provided the following recommendations.

- Rely on resources that are already available through state and federal partners.
- Since there is a multitude of outreach materials already available on the subject, avoid reinventing the wheel and maintain a consistent message.
- Host a webpage on the Council’s website which would house all of this information.
- Produce a 1-page printed document to distribute to port agents, tackle shops, and fish houses.
- Use social media to engage the public.

Some AP members voiced concerns about how the amendment would be enforced, especially with the current definition of descending devices and venting tools in the amendment’s actions and alternatives. Those AP members with law enforcement backgrounds encouraged the Council to reconsider the language to make requirements clear, holding fishermen accountable for their actions when targeting snapper grouper species.

The AP was asked whether or not they felt descending devices and other best practices should be required by law or encouraged via an outreach campaign, The AP could not reach a consensus on this topic. Some AP members thought that new regulations would be necessary to modify behavior, while others felt more traction could come from an outreach campaign. Some suggested a “phase-in” approach, in which an outreach campaign would be used to encourage the use of descending devices ahead of any regulatory requirements to be considered in the future.

**5) Partnership Opportunities with AP Members/Agency Outreach Projects**

To help frame the discussion on outreach partnership opportunities, the AP was asked the following discussion questions:

Projects/Campaigns/Initiatives

- What outreach/education campaigns/initiatives have you and your agency/organization been working on?
- How can other agencies help to promote/support your project?
- How can we more regularly facilitate exchanges like this among Advisory Panel Members and their agencies/organizations?

Tools/Resources for Outreach

- What types of tools (software, social media, etc) do you use to develop and deliver your programs/projects?

- Are there types of outreach tools/resources that you are interested in learning?
- How do you evaluate the success of your campaigns/initiatives?

AP members each discussed projects underway and any opportunities to partner on outreach.

### **NCDMF**

- Newsletter now under Constant Contact
  - Focus on science behind management
  - Best Practices Campaign
    - Catch and release isn't always the answer
  - Climate Change
    - How to address shifting species and habitats

### **United States Coast Guard**

- Education
  - Lectures at College of Charleston
    - Law Enforcement 101
    - Conservation
  - Training
    - Simulated boardings
    - Species ID
  - Job Aid
    - Partnering with ACCSP to develop an app for Job Aid

### **FWC & FL Sea Grant**

- Florida Friendly Fishing Guide Certification
  - 6 hr online voluntary certification course
  - Seafood safety
  - Sustainable waste
  - Fishery management research
- Best Practices Campaign
  - Beyond recompressions tools
    - Landing nets
    - Important messages
      - Good for the fish AND the fisherman

### **NC Sea Grant**

- Introductory Fisheries Science Class
  - 4 days of training (in-person and online)
  - Following the similar course material as MREP
- Blog
  - Hook, Line & Science
  - Research reports or articles (500 words or less)
  - Willing to serve as a content provider for other organizations/agencies

- Promote info and share news from others

### **Caribbean Fishery Management Council**

- Transition to specific management plans for each island
  - Outreach & Ed specific to each island
    - YouTube & Facebook
      - Cultural diversity
    - Coloring books
    - Commercial education program

### **GA DNR**

- Guy Harvey Magazine Article
- License Plate
- Kids Programs - Fishing Camps, Adventure book
- Adult fishing classes
- Fish Smart (descending devices and red drum leader rigs)

### **SC DNR**

- Coastal Resources Blog
- Fish Smart (descending devices and red drum leader rigs)
- Marine Recreational Tagging Program

### **Wild Ocean Market**

- Joined local Chamber of Commerce
- Instagram
- Symposium
  - Chefs and media brought together to interact with Dr. Roy Crabtree in an effort to better understand management

Areas for Collaboration and Sharing:

After the round robin discussion, the AP suggested several items where AP members and Council staff could collaborate.

- Have Council staff develop a google doc to keep I&E AP members updated on developing and current projects.
- Establish a document to collect relevant fishery hashtags for use across social media platforms to help develop shared messaging across organizations and agencies.
- AP members expressed an interest in learning more about the Shiny App.

Almost all AP members noted that their agencies/organizations are using social media. Some directly engage through those platforms, answering questions and responding to comments. Others keep the material strictly informational and do not allow comments to avoid “trolling” and the promotion of inaccurate information. AP members and their agencies are using Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Instagram, blogs, Story Maps, and other forms of social media to educate and engage their audiences. Although the AP noted that online campaigns are

important, not only from an economic standpoint but also when considering reach, they also emphasized the importance of in-person interactions.

When asked how they evaluate the success of their campaigns, AP members rely heavily on analytics either provided through google or through the “insights” features associated with a specific social media platform, like Facebook. To assess participation and effectiveness, some AP members suggested that the Council begin to track webinar participation and compare how many of those individuals go on to provide public comment.

#### **6) MyFishCount Update**

The AP reviewed a demo of the mobile application, MyFishCount, and provided some suggestions for features to include,

- Push notifications in the app;
- Alarming people to errors (for example: recording having kept a fish that is prohibited to harvest).
- Clarify the difference between MyFishCount and the Citizen Science Program’s Release app.

When discussing how to continue promoting the app, AP members commented that it might be beneficial to participate in more podcasts, especially when trying to engage younger generations of fishermen.

After discussing the MyFishCount project and the mobile application, the AP received a presentation from Erin Spencer, a graduate student with UNC-Chapel Hill. Spencer issued a survey that the AP helped develop during their last meeting (October 2017) and presented the results of that survey.

#### **7) For-Hire Electronic Reporting Trainings**

Staff provided an update on the For-Hire Electronic Reporting Trainings that have been taking place across the region. In addition to discussing the trainings and the key take-aways from those sessions, staff presented two graphics and a shiny app dedicated to clarifying confusion about permits.

#### **8) System Management Plan Workgroup**

The AP was briefed on the work plan for the System Management Plan Workgroup and reviewed a draft version of the story map being produced to assess the effectiveness of marine protected areas and spawning special management zones.

#### **9) Fish Rules**

Council staff walked through new features recently incorporated into the app, including the toggle button to transition between state and federal regulations for a given species. Staff also encouraged other agencies/organizations to promote the app. Some AP members expressed an interest in learning more about Fish Rules and the partnership that has been established by the SAFMC and the GMFMC. The AP also made some suggestions for improving the app – addition of photos that demonstrate what a fish looks like, both alive and dead, fresh or frozen, and addition of images to explain how to measure fork length versus total length.

### **10) Fishermen's Forum**

Staff provided an update on the Council's Fishermen's Forum, an online platform for fishermen to discuss fisheries issues amongst themselves. Initially, the forum only allowed commercial snapper grouper permit holders access to the discussion. Others could view but could not participate. The forum has since expanded to also include charter/headboat permit holders in the South Atlantic. The forum is on hold at the moment but will again be prioritized once the final rule for For-Hire Electronic Reporting publishes.

### **Other Business**

- Scott Baker presented the results of a recreational fisheries survey conducted by NC Sea Grant to assess the outreach needs of the recreational sector.

### **AP Members in Attendance**

Scott Baker, Jr., Chair  
Richard Abrams, Vice Chair (via webinar)  
Katie Latanich  
Kenny Moore  
Cinthia Sandoval (via webinar)  
Patricia Smith  
Blaik Keppler  
Paul Medders  
Lt. Warren Fair  
Diana Martino